

/231 cont./

442 The care of women at the time of childbirth has also been culturally assigned to women (Cf. Marriage). However, in certain cases the husband may be present at the birth to give secondary assistance, but only at the request of the expectant mother and the midwife.

When recently born infants develop illnesses of gastro-intestinal types, it is a custom in La Guajira to obtain the services of a woman, who attempts to deduce the magic cause of the illness from different characteristics of the /child's/ excrement.

Tattooing, generally used to mark the different clans, and other kinds of markings, in some cases initials or names, are carried out by Guajiro women.

442 Remunerative work. This form of work, a consequence of the process of acculturation, is developing, especially in urban zones and their environs; it has not, however, broken the traditional distribution of labor by sex but has become subordinate to it, so that the men work for wages in activities appropriate to their sex and women do the same.

472 Among the remunerative occupations in which the Guajiro man is employed we can point out the following:

463 a) Pearl fishing. In the zones in which oysters are very abundant such as in the ports of Cardón, Ahuyama, and Carrizal. The native either fishes on his own account and sells the pearls on the open market, or he works for a wage under orders given by a white or a mestizo who hires him as diver. He also participates in small shellfishing for cockles and other species in the northern coastal zone, although sporadically, with the idea of selling his catch on his own account, or as a paid assistant of the whites who are in this business for profit. /232/

b) As a day laborer. At some ports where the loading and unloading ships is of some importance, as happens in Puerto Estrella and in Ríohacha, it is the native, who, provided with a boat of his own or one belonging to a merchant, contracts to transport cargo from the ships to land and vice versa. He collaborates especially in the commercial moving of contraband which forms the base of the economic life of these ports.

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63 c) Mechanic. The Guajiro has a special capacity for learning manual and mechanical work. As a result he rapidly becomes skilled as hauler and even as chauffeur on the roads that cross the peninsula, in the neighboring republic of Venezuela, and in the case of banana plantations. This activity is very popular among the natives.

d) As an agricultural peon. Another part of the Guajiro labor force finds work in agricultural activities, although agricultural tasks in themselves are not particularly attractive to the native. However, they take up this kind of work more frequently around El Estero, toward the zone of the so-called "Province" (department of Magdalena), and in Venezuela.

Within the peninsula the Guajiro carries out these activities for mutual assistance and only on rare occasions for payment of wages on the haciendas of rich mestizo or native families. In stock raising there is a special form of remunerative activity for the poor Guajiro who looks after the herds of more well-to-do owners. This form consists of the animals (carefully counted) being handed over to the herdsman to be pastured in exchange for the use of the products from the livestock, milk, hides, and meat of those that die -- some are raised and, sporadically a little corn, cloth for a robe, etc. As we see, it offers a special form of remuneration.

e) As paid laborer. The native works in the saltworks of the Bank of the Republic established on the north coast of La Guajira. Following the traditional division of labor by sex, the men pick and shovel the lumps of salt from the deposits and leave the rest of the work to the women. They do not receive a daily fixed wage but a sum in accordance with the amount done during the day. They also work on a daily paid basis either for a private concern or for one of the various branches of government, working /232/ in trades such as that of bricklayer, salesman, laborer in the making of bricks, burning of lime and charcoal, carting of material, excavation of wells in the Water Supply section, or messenger or servant in the houses of the families of civilizados /nonnatives/ in the urban centers.

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472 1) As a hobby. During the leisure hours of the day or during
his spare time, he makes at home small objects that can be sold
43 to his fellow Indians or to whites, such as tools, harness, figures
of coconut shell and of plastic material, necklaces, bags, pouches,
weapons, hats, etc.

Along with the profession of shaman in which both sexes
participate, and that of diviner, we find the occupation of
artisan, which demands the personal qualities already enu-
merated in the previous chapter and which gives to the individual
who exercises it not only prestige among his relatives and com-
patriots but also the right to remuneration.

Another trade that has become remunerative is that of harness
and saddle making. Although some women compete successfully
in the manufacture, the culture considers them intruders, be-
cause this is an activity recognized traditionally as belonging
to the masculine sex.

441 As a product of acculturation through whites and facilitated
47 by civilization and the closeness of Venezuela as well as by the
decline in traditional economic activities, commercial activity
has developed among the Guajiro. It is not so much the pro-
fession as it is the means of some economic means who devote
himself to this /commerce/; the fact should be noted that women,
under equal conditions, participate actively in the exploitation of
this economic source. They go to Aruba and Curaçao and obtain
cheap merchandise on credit, which they bring in by smuggling
to sell in Colombia, following the route to Kichacha or Valledupar
or continuing on the route to Venezuela. Some do not work
directly as owners of the goods but as carriers across the peninsula
to deliver them at their destination.

472 Women find remunerative work especially in domestic service,
such carting for children, preparing food, carrying water and
483 firewood, cleaning, etc. They also work in the capacity of maid
with the obligation of living in the home where they work. The
Guajiro woman does not willingly work under these latter con-
ditions as she prefers the free life of her own home, although food

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Other ways to create living in the employee's home. Such a way
usually has been made, known as the a discipline in which the
is an achievement. For this reason, the home has a way to combine
both systems and with freedom and work in the other system,
control strategy, which strategy, which very rich, with work,
/the/ work, and finally, as much as work home. But in the
creating the home in the home, /usually/ or usually /a desire
of working/ on the members of the city.

There is no other use of the word, in the world, and it is not, but it is used in sufficient quantity to make the change without any other and, in the end, the end is the same.

The women also take part in the work in the cellars, as we have seen, in order to assist their husbands in the transport of the material.

The women of Larva have been the principal makers of pottery, since they have abundant raw material at their disposal, which is lacking in other regions. For this reason, at the present time, they try to supply the entire peninsula by making a considerable supply with which they travel through the country and obtain an adequate remuneration either by barter or by sale.

Weaving of cloth, as we have said, supplies the women with a source of income. Some well-to-do Indian and mestizo women have organized a /specialized/ division of labor to supply the demand for hammocks and bags in the markets of Macacabe and in some towns in the department of Magdalena.

These women, well informed about the wants of the market, prepare in their homes harmonies of fashionable colors and regulation size. They hand over a design of their own or one copied from a magazine to a poor Guajiro woman who takes it to her house and works it up on her own loom during her spare time. Once the central part is woven the owner hands it on to a worker expert in finishing, then a third one with her spinning tackle makes the cords. While these portions are being made in sequence, the fringes to match the color of the central part have been made by

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472 one or more other women, who if required will complete the
463 work by making the tassels that adorn it. Each one of these
236 women workers is controlled by the owner, of the raw material
from whom they receive it. They do it in their respective homes.
The completed work is paid for in accordance with the skill and
quality /of its execution/ and not by the time spent on it. The
finished product is the property of the owner of the raw material,
who can sell it at her convenience. The tools and equipment
employed belong to the workers. Another common practice is
for some poor women to weave the cloth on their own account,
and later to sell it to a rich woman who has facilities for bringing
the product to the market. The cloth is always sold at a lower
price to give the intermediary a margin of profit. /235/

A third form consists of receiving orders and weaving per-
sonally, or using weavers who receive wages and who work at
home, hammocks, bags, and items of harness previously ordered
by the merchants.

472 An occupation that allows the Guajiro woman to obtain some
463 income is dressmaking. Guajiro women learn to sew the robes
for both masculine and feminine use, and other articles of apparel,
which they sew not only for their home needs and their relatives
but also to fill orders from customers.

In the Sierra de Jazara and the Sierra de Macuira and in
other places distant from urban centers, some old women live
who are acquainted with the magic and curative properties of
various plants. This knowledge is usually transmitted from mother
to eldest daughter and is much sought after and remunerated in
proportion to the importance of the case, its efficacy, and the
prestige of the herbal expert who prescribes it, and the importance
of the person who requests it.

Another profession is that of midwife, who receives payment
in relation to her ability and the means of whoever applies for
her services.

Unfree work. This is done by bond-servant or slave labor.
See chapter /VIII/ Slavery and Bond Service. /page 236 is blank/